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TAGS: OVIP PTER PREL KCRM IZ TU
SUBJECT: FBI DIRECTOR'S VISIT: DPM CICEK WELCOMES CLOSER CT
COOPERATION

Classified By: POL Counselor Daniel O'Grady, for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. FBI Director Mueller offered to share biometric data with Turkey, post a second FBI agent in Ankara and assist Turkey with strengthening its counterterrorism legislation, FBI Director Mueller told DPM Cicek during a November 18 meeting. Biometric sharing would require changes to Turkish law, the DPM reported; relevant legislation was before the Parliament. When the Director raised U.S. concerns about terrorists transiting Turkey, Cicek said he shared those concerns, but countered that many Turks question why the U.S. does not do more to stop PKK terrorists from attacking Turkey from northern Iraq. The DPM also offered to share draft CT-related legislation and information on the TNP's new terrorism task force with the Embassy. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) FBI Director Robert Mueller met November 18 with Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Cemil Cicek to discuss a wide range of law enforcement cooperation issues. The Director was accompanied by Assistant Director Sean Joyce, DCM Doug Silliman, Special Assistant Debra Smith, Legal Attaché Raymond Duda and the embassy interpreter. Director Mueller noted the FBI's strong relationship with the Turkish National Police (TNP) in both counter-terrorism and cyber crime investigations and the need to share information even more quickly in the age of globalization. We should seek opportunities to take the already close cooperation to the next level, he stated. Director Mueller also took the opportunity to reiterate an invitation to Washington to discuss the issues planned for Cicek's postponed July visit.

Taking Cooperation to the Next Level

¶3. (C) The FBI has extensive biometric databases that the United States is willing to make available to Turkey, the Director told Cicek. These databases include DNA and fingerprints from IEDs recovered in Iraq that have been examined by the FBI laboratory. He urged Turkey to participate in an arrangement that would allow the TNP to run its own fingerprints and DNA through the FBI's database; in the case of a "hit," the FBI could then release the associated intelligence to them.

¶4. (C) Noting the value of joint task forces, Director Mueller offered to assign a second FBI Agent to Ankara to work exclusively with the TNP on counterterrorism matters.

Ideally, this would take the form of a task force or working group relationship that could facilitate a more timely exchange of intelligence. The Director referred to the success the FBI has seen using a similar arrangement with the Hungarian National Police on organized crime.

¶ 15. (C) Turning to the issue of counterterrorism laws, the Director recalled U.S. inability to adequately address terrorism in the United States before 9/11 because of poor counter-terrorism laws. The lack of a "material support" law had hampered U.S. efforts, he observed. That had now been remedied and laws are now more effective. It was his understanding, the Director continued, that Turkish law does not apply to terrorist attacks against non-Turkish targets and suggested Turkey consider changes that would allow them to address terrorism across the board so it can be more effective. The FBI is willing to help Turkey strengthen its counterterrorism laws, he offered.

¶ 16. (C) Without directly responding to the Director's proposals, DPM Cicek acknowledged that Turkey needs new levels of international cooperation on terrorism. He had learned first hand the importance of intelligence sharing at the time of the 2005 Istanbul bombings while he was Minister of Justice. European countries, however, were not providing enough counterterrorism cooperation, he lamented. Cooperation on counterterrorism requires trust, and Turkey lacks that trust with European countries. Europe has detained PKK drug kingpins, but has not returned them to Turkey.

Change in the Works

¶ 17. (C) The sharing of biometric data, DMP Cicek continued, requires changes in Turkish law regarding the protection of personal data. A bill to address this issue was currently pending in Parliament but was being held up by Parliament's preoccupation with the Democratic Opening, Armenia, and other counterterrorism issues. Separately, Parliament was also considering a bill to establish a CT-focused Undersecretariat within the Interior Ministry. The new undersecretariat would provide a new perspective on a range of counterterrorism issues, including the need to pass new laws. Currently, MOJ is the only agency that deals with new laws; the new mechanism will add a necessary new viewpoint. Cicek offered to have the draft bills forwarded to the Embassy, along with information on the TNP's new terrorism task force proposal. As countries which had both suffered from terrorist attacks, cooperation between the United States and Turkey is important.

¶ 18. (C) U.S.-Turkey CT cooperation had improved significantly since his last visit in 2005, Director Mueller observed, particularly since the agreements of 2007. Nonetheless, the United States remains concerned about terrorists transiting Turkey, often through Istanbul. It would be difficult to explain to the U.S. public if terrorists who had transited Turkey were to attack the United States. Why, it would be asked, hadn't the U.S. Government done more? Cicek replied that he shared the Director's concerns. Turkey has, indeed, been sharing information on terrorism, including Al Qaeda, with the U.S. Actually, the Turkish public was asking similar questions. The Turkish public believes Iraq is under U.S. control and yet no terrorists have been returned to Turkey from Iraq. As the sole superpower, shouldn't the United States be doing more to stop PKK terrorist attacks on Turkey from northern Iraq? Turkey, he noted, has given names of 244 terrorists to the United States and Iraq, yet none have been turned over. Director Mueller promised to convey Cicek's concern to the relevant U.S. authorities, but added that many people think the U.S. has more control in Iraq than it actually has. He also reminded the DPM of the robust intelligence sharing the United States has been providing on Turkey's southeast border.

More than Counterterrorism

¶ 9. (C) Shifting gears, the Director turned to other areas of law enforcement cooperation between the two countries that could benefit from further strengthening. Our two countries have a history of successful joint investigations on cyber crime, narcotics trafficking, trafficking-in-persons, and organized crime; this intelligence sharing must continue, he stated. All involve trans-national crime and require us to work cooperatively. DPM Cicek agreed on the need to work together on these issues, pointing out that both human and drug trafficking help finance terrorism. For both of these crimes, Turkey is a transit state, not a destination, he noted. Turkish law enforcement agencies are addressing these problems; concrete results in Turkey are helping the international community. To illustrate the point, Cicek said reports of successful drug busts on narcotics trafficked from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran were in the newspapers "nearly every day." Nonetheless, we must all work still harder, he stated.

¶ 10. (U) Director Mueller did not have an opportunity to clear this message.

Silliman

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